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Britain and her North American colonies. Our limits permit us only at this time to add, that those discussions are still in the unsettled state in which we have represented them ; that a good deal of irritation has lately been observed between the principal delegate of the executive power and the second branch of the the legislative body of Lower Canada ; that the union of the two Canadas is still dreaded by the French inhabitants ; and that probably before long, the British government will come to some decisive measure, either to satisfy or to silence the pretensions of its Canadian population. Meanwhile, the military defence of Lower Canada is incessantly attended to by the governor and the other generals entrusted with the superintendence of the fortifications of Quebec ; and Great Britain is furnishing largely the means required to carry them to an extent and to give them a strength, which may in time make of the capital of Lower Canada a rival of the impregnable fortresses of Europe, and thus add a new feature to the military character of the country.

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ART. II.—*Storia dell' America, in Continuazione del Compendio della Storia Universale, del Sig. Conte di Segur. Opera originale Italiana.* Milano, presso la Società Tipographica de' Classici Italiani (Fusi, Stella, e Compagni.) Tom. 29, in 18mo. 1820—1823.

THESE volumes have not, so far as our observation extends, been criticised or even mentioned in any American journal. The work amply deserves, respectful notice at our hands, as well for its general subject matter, being the history of the whole continent of America, as for the merit of its execution. It was undertaken, as it appears, at the suggestion of the intelligent publishers in Milan ; who, at the commencement of the publication, hardly anticipated the value and magnitude of the book, which they were calling into existence. Its design originated in a Compendium of Universal History, commenced by count Segur but not completed, which the publishers of the book before us procured to be translated from the French into Italian, and printed by subscription at Milan. Twenty-seven volumes of the Compendium as composed by

Segur, comprising ancient history, so called, with that of Rome and the Empire, preceded the history of America in twenty-eight volumes, after which came the history of several nations of modern Europe. All these are professedly translations into Italian from other languages, excepting *America*, which is an original work written by the cavaliere Giuseppe Compagnoni, and aspires to be something much beyond a common abridgement.

It is, in fact, what no other nation but Italy possesses, a full and methodical account of events in America, from the first discovery of the new world by Columbus down to the present day, omitting only the recent history of the Spanish and Portuguese colonies. With the exception, then, of this portion of the history of America, the work of our author is complete.

And it is a little remarkable, we think, that the classic history of Botta should be so soon followed by the present publication, which although more compendious in its plan, yet covers a much wider field, and is therefore calculated to be more generally interesting to Americans. The Italian language, the mother tongue of the poetry and fine letters of modern Europe, can thus boast the first finished history of the American Revolution, and the first, also, of the entire New World.

Italy, if she have planted no colonies upon our soil, if none of the new family of nations inhabiting this continent can look back to her as the home of their forefathers, possesses, nevertheless, ample claims on our regard, through the exertions and talents of individual Italians. Whilst other nations, with resources much inferior to those of Italy united, were collecting means to found colonial establishments abroad, the want of union and harmony unnerved her arm and paralyzed her vigor. As a body, therefore, the Italians do not occupy a single page in the history of America, because they have achieved nothing as a body ; but in respect of the fame attached to the names of individuals of that country, Italy need not shrink from comparison with any other people. Her citizens led the early expeditions of every nation, which gained important possessions in the new world. If the example of Columbus were a solitary case of its kind, it might be attributed to chance, and not to the preëminent intellectual character of the men of his nation at that period. But we can be at no loss to understand the true cause, when we consider that Sebastian Cabot, with his brother and father, gave England her title by discovery to

territory in America, and was afterwards the first to explore the river La Plata in the service of Spain ; that Vespucci, when employed by the Portuguese, taught them to appreciate the value of Brazil, originally denominated America, in honor of Vespucci himself, before the word was applied to the whole continent ; that Pigafetta was the guide of Magellan ; and that Verazzani conducted the French to the shores of the New World ; all these distinguished navigators being Italians by birth and education. And their countrymen of the present time are not unworthily associating their reputation with the name of America, by historical writings of well earned celebrity, devoted to the western continent.

The work before us, it is to be understood, is of a popular cast, and intended to supply the wants of the public at large, rather than of the profound scholar. No other consideration would justify the absence of citations and of original authorities, a thing so essential to the credit of a digested history, in the view of sound criticism, and only to be dispensed with, as in the present case, where the main object is to communicate information to the general reader in the most compendious and agreeable shape. In obedience to the same rule of composition, Compagnoni has introduced into his book numerous details of remarkable events, and individual traits and incidents, which many writers of deserved eminence have seemed to consider as derogatory to the dignity and stateliness of the historic muse. Our author adopted this feature of his work, it may be added, in imitation of the Historical Library of Diodorus Siculus, which is distinguished for this peculiarity of plan.

Compagnoni exhibits another peculiarity of plan, the influence of which over the general character of his work is yet more decided. He enters fully into the history of the indigenous nations of America, describing their government and usages with considerable minuteness, and dwelling with evident interest upon events in which they bore a leading part. Most other writers have contented themselves with presenting a very general account of the aborigines and of their various customs. Compagnoni, regarding it as highly useful to unfold the character of the native Americans circumstantially, because affording us the clearest and truest idea of man in his primitive condition, has distinguished the various races with uncommon care, from the rude savages of the Orinoco to the culti-

vated people of Peru, discriminating between all the prominent tribes, which lie scattered over the vast extent of the continent. This course is not wholly without objection, because among the little Indian communities, thus raised into notoriety, are some which present few qualities to fix the attention, and the attempt to describe them all particularly, leads inevitably to some faults of confusion and repetition. Our observation, however, does not apply to those aggregations of tribes, in different parts of America, which on all accounts may fairly lay claim to the dignity of nations, possessing stable institutions as curious as they are peculiar. The Indians of Arauco, Peru, Bogotá, the Missions, Guatemala, Tlascala, Mexico, the Natchez, and the Six Nations, for example, better deserve the study of the antiquary and historian, than many a people of Europe and Asia, to whom accident has imparted disproportioned celebrity.

But without detaining the reader any longer with general remarks upon our author's book, we shall proceed to make a few extracts in illustration of its style and execution, interspersing such observations of our own as occasion may suggest. The two first volumes are introductory altogether, comprising a physical description of America, a general view of the moral qualities and of the manners and customs of the Indians, an account of the indigenous animals and other natural productions of the country, and some brief speculations upon the origin of the Americans. Passing over the introduction, we come, in the third volume, to the voyages of Columbus. Respecting this familiar topic we offer but a single remark. Our author yields assent, we perceive, to the old hypothesis of the disingenuous conduct of Americus in giving his name to the continent, in derogation of the just claims of its discoverer. We accordingly feel justified in the renewed assertion of the facts published in our journal some years ago, tending to vindicate the reputation of the Florentine. It is well known that all writers, contemporary with the discovery of America, distinguished it by the appellation of the *New World*; by which name, or that of the *Indies*, it is called to this day in Spain. All the Portuguese historians of Brazil, and many of the old writers on the subject of that country among other nations, alike concur in stating that *Brazil* was originally denominated *America*, in honor of Vespucci. The application of the name to the whole of the New World was a later thing, and

happened in the following manner. For fifty years after the discovery of this continent, most (we may perhaps very safely say all) of the maps published in Europe treated the New World as if it were a group of islands, few portions of it having been thoroughly explored, and it being some time before the true geography even of those portions was universally understood. Thus Florida, Cuba, Hispaniola, Venezuela, and Brazil, under the name of America, were depicted in the maps as islands. It gradually became known that the land stretched uninterruptedly far south along the region called America, and this supposed island was therefore gradually increased in size on the maps, until, by the time that the actual state of the facts became well established, the *island* of America had extended itself on either hand so far as to occupy substantially the very space upon the globe, which belongs to the southern continent. Meantime, the tracts of land that were really islands retained their primitive names, while the name of America having spread with the growing expansion of the region to which it was originally affixed, was left in the possession of the new meaning it thus had accidentally acquired. All this happened, not merely without any contrivance on the part of Vespucci, any scheme to injure the reputation or appropriate to himself the fame of Columbus, with whom he remained on terms of the most cordial and confidential intimacy to the day of his death,—but so far was Vespucci from contributing to bring about the result, that no acts of his could possibly have produced the series of mistakes by which it was occasioned. It is due to justice, that all these facts should be borne in mind, whenever the mere good luck of the name of America, should afford argument for questioning the integrity of Vespucci \*

The same volume gives an account of the early establishments in Cuba and Hayti, in the course of which our author feelingly contrasts the amiable and pacific disposition of the natives with the savage enormities practised upon them by the Spaniards. One trait deserves to be extracted.

‘It was in this island [Hayti] that the Spaniards originally made use of those fierce mastiffs, who cruelly aided them against the Indians, by mangling their naked bodies. And it reflects eternal shame upon these ferocious conquerors, and a shame peculiar to

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\* See North American Review for April, 1821, vol. xii. p. 336; and for April, 1827, vol. xv. p. 284.

them, that Spanish writers of no small repute should have celebrated the prowess of one of these dogs, called Bezzerillo. \* \* \* \* The Spaniards had trained them in such manner that they did better service, either in battles upon a fair field, or in standing sentinel during the night, or in guarding prisoners, or in watching against unexpected attacks, than men themselves. And so habituated were they to track the scent of the Indians and of their blood, that none could escape their ferocity. And Bezzerillo enriched his master, who drew for him a day's pay and a half, as ranking with cross-bow men. His custom was, when despatched in pursuit of an Indian, to rush upon him, and drag him by the arm to the camp or entrenchments ; and to rend him into pieces on the instant if he offered any show of resistance. \* \* \* Such, indeed, in a good measure, were the ferocity and the habits of the other mastiffs, whom the miserable Indians justly dreaded more than the Spaniards themselves, because from the latter there was some chance of escape, but from the former none. The race of Bezzerillo was propagated from the islands to the continent, for the destruction of the inhabitants of the main.'—*Storia dell' Amer.* vol. iii. p. 164.

In the four volumes which follow we have the history of the conquest of Mexico, preceded by an account of the early expeditions of Alonzo de Ojeda, Diego de Nicuessa, Vasco Nuñez de Balboa, and others upon the Spanish Main. The enterprises of Ojeda and of Nicuessa are memorable for the series of unparalleled disasters which they sustained, terminating in the total destruction of their forces ; and still more memorable for the haughty declaration of the alleged rights of the king of Spain, which they put forth on occasion of their expedition ; and the calamitous result of them would tempt us to regard it as the visitation of divine justice upon pretensions so extravagant and outrageous. Our author copies this celebrated document from the pages of the Spanish writer Herrera, who records it as the fruit of the united wisdom of the jurists and theologians of his country ; and Compagnoni treats it with no less indignation than our own Robertson.

The expedition of Cortez for the conquest of Mexico opened a succession of adventures so singular, and of achievements so wonderful, that, if the events attending the overthrow of the barbaric monarchy of Montezuma were narrated in the form of professed romance, we sincerely believe the work would be censured as consisting of incidents too extraordinary for the limits of reasonable probability. Compagnoni describes

them in a simple, unambitious style, relying upon the inherent quality of the facts themselves to communicate interest to his relation. Indeed, so strange were the vicissitudes of the war, that Cortez must inevitably have failed of success in his daring enterprise, but for a remarkable coincidence of events in his favor, without which, notwithstanding his fertility in devising expedients and his undeniable superiority in courage, activity, and other military virtues, his destruction would have been certain. Among these, his fortunate alliance with the republic of Tlascala may be ranked as one of his foremost advantages.

Compagnoni draws a much more full and accurate picture of the unheard-of miseries inflicted by Cortez upon the Mexicans than we find in Robertson. Such a scene of calamity and destruction the world has seldom witnessed. In the last siege of the city of Mexico, more than a hundred thousand persons perished in battle, and more than fifty thousand by infectious distempers, occasioned by the impurity of the air arising from the great multitude of putrefying bodies. There is no excess of suffering which the wretched Indians did not undergo in the defence of their capital. Bernal Diaz del Castillo, one of the *conquistadores*, bears witness, from his personal observation, that it exceeded all the horrors recorded of the destruction of Jerusalem by Titus. It would seem, indeed, as if Cortez and his followers had become actually brutified in this terrible war; for the same insatiable thirst of blood appears to have animated all alike, the officers as well as the common soldiers. The individual acts of cold-blooded cruelty which they committed are truly astonishing. But what was to be expected from the low-bred foot-soldier, when Cortez himself could condescend to torture Guatemotzin, with his chief minister, and his vassal, the king of Tlacopan, by smearing their feet with oil, and suspending them over brasiers of burning coals? Even the obdurate army itself murmured, when he caused the captive emperor, and the two highest princes of the empire, to be ignominiously executed as common malefactors, on some such light suspicion as had before furnished a pretext for the similar murder of Xicotencatl, the noble-minded Tlascalan chief. The populous cities of Chila and Panuco razed to the earth, and four hundred and sixty of the principal nobles of Panuco burnt alive, sufficiently signaled the vindictiveness of Cortez and of Gonzalo Sandoval, the best and trustiest of his officers, under whose direction were



performed these acts, better beseeming infuriated demons than christian men. Nuño de Guzman rendered his name infamous by marches, every step of which was tracked with blood wantonly shed, and which ended in his plundering the inhabitants of Mechoacan, in violation of the faith of treaties, and burning their king alive on the most frivolous allegations. And not to be wanting in their vocation, the Spanish friars busily coöperated in the work of destruction, so far as lay in their power. Thus, regarding the Mexican paintings as instruments of idolatry, they piled up an immense heap of these precious records in the market-place of Tezcucó, and consigned them to the flames. Actuated by the same spirit of Vandalism, the first bishop of Mexico caused the most valuable monuments of Mexican sculpture to be broken into fragments and employed as common stones in the construction of a cathedral.

In passing from this subject to the four succeeding volumes, devoted to Peru, we change the scene indeed, but the character of events undergoes no change. Compagnoni justly remarks that if the story of the conquest of Peru were not supported by irrefragable proofs, it might be deemed a romance copied from that of Mexico, so entirely did the conduct of Atahualpa resemble Montezuma's. How worthy of the cruelty of Cortez towards Guatemotzin was the execution of the Inca by Pizarro ; and yet how mean the spirit which could seek to disguise this murder under the mockery of a trial ! The observations of our author, on the treatment of Atahualpa, are in a high degree judicious and forcible, but our limits oblige us to hasten over them.

In his account of the Mexicans and Peruvians, Compagnoni bestows adequate space upon the history and institutions of these two nations, the most polished of all the inhabitants of America. The extent of a single article would not afford room for discussing these copious subjects. We pass on, therefore, to the volumes which relate to Chile, La Plata and Paraguay. And in perusing the account of Chile, we are struck with the simplicity, and at the same time the perfect efficacy, of the plan of warfare adopted by Capolican and the intrepid Araucanians, in their engagements with Valdivia. When we recollect the sufferings of the vanquished Mexicans and Peruvians, we are prompted to wish that, instead of prodigally wasting their strength in hopeless general encounters, they had anticipated the decree of Capolican. His army consisted of only

fifteen thousand men, and these neither braver nor more devoted to their country's cause, than the myriads who fell before Cortez. Finding that in every pitched battle his undisciplined forces were speedily thrown into confusion and driven from the field by the Spanish cavalry, he divided his little army into separate bands of a thousand men each ; and organized them in such manner that they should fight, not as parts of one army, but as successive and independent armies. He tried his battalions, at first, by occasionally sallying from his fastnesses in the desert, and attacking the Spaniards, in front, in flank, or in rear, as advantage offered, without leaving them the slightest interval for repose. After harassing Valdivia in this way sufficiently to discipline his own followers, he determined to venture a general engagement, upon his new system of tactics. There was no cause, he conceived, to apprehend the Spanish cavalry now ; for as the number of their horse did not exceed five hundred, one of his battalions might sustain the first brunt of the attack ; and another and another successively marching to the relief of their countrymen, the Araucanians would thus combat always with fresh forces, while the Spaniards would all be exhausted and disheartened alike.

The event exactly corresponded to Capolican's anticipations. His onset was conducted with a precision and firmness never before witnessed among Americans, and struck the Spaniards with astonishment and hesitation. Ere these last had fully regained their presence of mind, he insensibly drew off his leading battalion, as it began to waver before the Spanish fire-arms, and marched up the second to the attack with equal impetuosity, and after this the third ; and thus attack after attack followed on without intermission for the space of eight hours, when the Spaniards, reduced to the very last degree of helpless fatigue, fled in confusion from the field of battle. But true to the maxims of military discipline, Valdivia's men rallied at some distance off, where he deemed them safe from the assaults of the Araucanians. Capolican, however, having obtained intelligence of their place of refuge from a Chilean page in the Spanish army, fell upon them unawares with a body of lancers, who rushed among the wearied Spaniards, and destroyed them almost to a man. Valdivia escaped ; but was soon taken prisoner, and despatched by a blow from Capolican's club. Some authors relate that the Araucanians poured a stream of molten gold down the throat of Valdivia, in scorn of his insatiable

thirst after riches ; but the account is not altogether probable ; and its exact similitude to the well known punishment inflicted upon Crassus by the victorious Parthians, tends to confirm the suspicion, that the incident has been greatly embellished by the Spanish friars. It is more credible that, as some reports have it, the Araucanians stuffed the mouth of Valdivia with gold dust,—a gratification of vengeance more simple than the other, and more accessible to these rude savages. Thus much is certain, however, that of the bones of Valdivia and his principal officers they constructed trumpets to animate their men in battle ; and, like the northern invaders of the Roman empire, preserved the skulls of their enemies as trophies of a victory, which secured the independence of the conquerors to the present day and perhaps for ever.

Next to the history of Chile, comes that of the countries bordering on the great river of La Plata and its far extending branches. Of all the principal divisions of the Spanish empire in America none was acquired so peaceably, and holden with so little oppression of the natives, as this. Sebastian Cabot, who first explored the Parana, conciliated the good will of the savages ; and it was a singular accident that interrupted the tranquil progress of the Spanish settlers. It is thus related by Compagnoni.

‘ A chief named Mangore became enamored of a beautiful Spaniard, Lucia Miranda, the wife of Sebastian Urtado. Failing in his attempt to seduce her, the daring savage determined to obtain possession of her by force. Seizing the occasion of the absence of the commandant of the fort, with forty men and Urtado himself, who were gone in quest of provisions, he concealed a party of his tribe in thickets near the place, and at early nightfall presented himself at the door, asking admission, because, having often come as a friend, he knew he should be received without distrust, and saying moreover that he brought provisions. The moment the door was opened, at a preconcerted signal, all his companions rushed from their hiding-place, and suddenly attacking the Spaniards, who had suspected nothing, slew them all, many of the Indians also falling in the affray, and among them Mangore himself. It is needless to describe the surprise and grief of the other Spaniards, when they returned from their expedition. Above all Urtado was desperate, when he sought in vain among the dead for the body of his wife, which he naturally inferred was in the hands of the savages. Frantic with grief, he pursued the track of the Indians, who at first doomed him to death, sparing his life only a

short time at the instance of the lady. A brother of Mangore was now enamored of her, but finding she would not return his passion, he barbarously caused her to be burnt alive, and shot her husband with an arrow.' Vol. xii. p. 77.

But, although hostilities continued for many years between the colonists of La Plata and the native inhabitants, yet the history of events unfolds none of those atrocious acts, which disgraced the Spanish arms in other quarters of America. Many of their conquests were achieved under the overpowering impulse of the lust after gold, which seemed to create in the mind a species of delirium, converting mild and merciful men into absolute monsters. But Buenos Aires and Paraguay being destitute of the precious metals, no such enormities occurred there at the period of the conquest, nor were the natives afterwards cruelly sacrificed by the tyrannical oppressions of the *mita* and *repartimientos*. The Indians, who submitted peaceably, were obliged to live in villages; prisoners taken in war passed into the gentle servitude of the *commende* established by the governor, Martinez de Yrala; and the Jesuits finally introduced the system of the Missions, which, whatever other objections may lie against it, cannot be chargeable with being cruel or sanguinary, like the government of the Spaniards in Peru. Nay, many tribes of Indians found refuge in Paraguay from the pursuit of the Portuguese of Brazil, who hunted them down like wild beasts for the purpose of making them slaves. Indeed the Indians in these countries, far from suffering the like miseries with the natives elsewhere, bid fair to become at no remote day an object of very serious apprehension to the Spaniards. What is there to distinguish between the brave and hardy Indian *Llaneros* of the Pampas, and the mounted Scythians, whom Genghis Khan led to the conquest of Asia?

Four volumes, from the fourteenth to the seventeenth inclusive, embrace the history of Brazil, in the events of which, all and more than all, that gives animation to other portions of our author's work, is here assembled. Riches not surpassed by those of Peru and Mexico, pursued with not less avidity by the Portuguese than by the Spanish *conquistadores*, Indians as fierce and independent as the Araucanians, examples of untiring industry in the cultivation of the finest region of America, if not of the earth,—add to this all the surprising vicissitudes of the Dutch invasion, and the reader will appreciate the singular interest attached to the whole course of the Brazilian his-

tory. English, French, Dutch, successively fixed a longing eye upon this fascinating country. And if France, instead of wasting her resources upon religious wars without any useful aim or object, had lent a little aid to Villegagnon, she might have been mistress of Brazil. Or if the Dutch had not conducted themselves with such folly, cruelty, and perfidy, they would have retained possession of their rich prize, in spite of all the efforts of the Portuguese settlers to regain their liberty. And how changed would be the whole face of America, and perhaps of Europe too, at the present day, if Brazil had become a colony of either France or Holland.

Following up the coast of South America, next to that of Brazil we have the history of Guiana, New Grenada, and Venezuela. In these volumes, among other topics of interest, there is an investigation of the subject of the far-famed El Dorado, which the cruel fate of Sir Walter Raleigh has rendered but too familiar to the English reader. The circumstances collected by Compagnoni certainly tend to show that the existence of some offset of the empire of the Incas within the interior of the continent is neither impossible, nor so improbable as it is generally supposed. The tradition among the Peruvians has been constant that a body of their countrymen, led by some of the surviving Incas, fled beyond the mountains into regions not yet explored. Some of the wandering tribes of the Orinoco have related the same story. Quesada, the conqueror of Bogotá, was so firmly convinced of it, that he retained the intention of penetrating Guiana to the last, and upon his death-bed, enjoined upon his son-in-law and heir, Antonio Berreo, to undertake the expedition. The discovery from time to time of inexhaustible gold mines in Brazil, is of itself sufficient to prove that there is nothing to violate all probability in supposing other tracts, abounding in mineral wealth, may exist in the immense extent of the untrodden interior of the continent. But the central regions of America and Africa seem alike fated to exercise and to confound the curiosity of geographers.

The conquest of Bogotá, which forms the principal subject of the nineteenth volume, is remarkably similar, in the course of its incidents, to the overthrow of the Mexican and Peruvian empires. Similar domestic factions enabled Quesada to contend with success against the power of Tizquesuca. The plunder of the golden bells of the valley of Tinsenu and of the graves of the caciques; the wanton and perfidious cruelties

everywhere inflicted by the Spaniards upon the Indians; the irresolution of the court; the plunder of cities, and gratuitous murder of princes and people; the destruction of the temple of Sagomoso;—all, even to the fate of Quesada, whose declining years were filled with disappointments and who died a leper, recalls to mind the sufferings of the conquered in Mexico and Peru, and the unenviable lot of their sanguinary conquerors.

In the twentieth and twenty-first volumes, our author gives the history of the Islands, including a particular account of the adventures of the buccaneers and of the Haytian revolution; but that we may subjoin a few words on a subject nearer home, we proceed to the concluding volumes of the work, which embrace the French and English colonies in North America, wherein the prominent place is devoted to the United States. Compagnoni's relation of our own history is impartial, spirited, and substantially correct. Commencing with the feeble beginnings of our greatness, in the little colonies planted at James Town and Plymouth, he traces the fortunes of our forefathers, through the years in which our country was imperceptibly filling out into the muscular proportions of national strength, to the time, when all its energies were put in requisition to maintain the great cause of independence, and thence down to the present day, when we ourselves are in the full fruition of all the blessings attendant on unexampled political freedom. Obeying the dictates of impartial historical truth, he speaks in terms of well-founded censure of the spiritual pride and uncharitableness in matters of religion which dishonored our New England ancestors, yet he bestows merited applause upon their fortitude, their simple purity of conduct in the duties of private life, their undying love of liberty, and their industry, enterprise, and perseverance, which enabled us to be what we are as a nation. He sketches the events of the revolutionary contest with boldness and effect, taking Botta for his guide, and faithfully abridging the fuller history of his countryman. In depicting the progress of our country since the adoption of the constitution, he follows Warden for his main authority respecting facts; and his observations upon party differences and the actual condition of the country, are, we think, distinguished for good sense and for great liberality of feeling in judging of us as a people, and of the operation of our free institutions.